what is the total number of cases pending; and

(c) what is the maximum amout awarded by each of these Courts State-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) to (c) The Statewise and yearwise information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House. However as on date, one National Commission at the national level, 30 State Commissions and 433 District Forums are functioning in the country.

Transfer of quota from F.P.S. to Cooperatives

1621. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that hundreds of fair price shops which were part of the Public Distribution System in Bhopal were closed down recently and their quota was transferred to cooperatives;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received any complaint about the irregularities in closing down the FPS and transferring their quota to cooperatives; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of Madhya Pradesh has reported that as per policy decision taken by the State Government all fair price shops in the State have been handed over to the cooperative societies for management w.e.f. 1-3-1992. All the fair price shops run by the private persons were closed and the cooperative societies entrusted with the work of FPSs. The State Government has established Madhya Pradesh (Khadhya Padarth) Sarvajanik Nagrik Purti Vitran Scheme, 1991 w.e.f. 1-3-1992.

(c) and (d) As reported by the State Government, there has been no irregularity in closing down the private shops.

Additional commodities under P.D.S.

1622. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to strengthen and streamline the Public Distribution System in the economically backward areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to include additional commodities like salt pulses, soap etc. for distribution by PDS outlets; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) to (d) Strengthening and streamlining of the Public Distribution System (PDS) is a continuous process. The Central Government in consultation with the State Governments/UT Administrations identified about 1700 chronically food deficit Blocks covered by various areas specific programmes to improve the reach of the PDS. Apart from the key essential commodities such as rice, wheat, levy sugar, imported edible oil and kerosene, the State Governments/UT Administrations were requested to include additional items of mass consumption taking into account the local preferences of the population. Many States/UT Administrations have reported that commodities such as tea, iodised salt, pulses, soaps, text books, spices, exercise books, matches are being distributed through the network of PDS outlets.